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VIRGINIA LEGISLATIVE PAPERS.

FROM ORIGINALS IN THE VIRGINIA STATE ARCHIVES.

CONTINUED.**NORTHAMPTON-COMMITTEE OF SAFETY TO GENERAL
COMMITTEE OF SAFETY.**

Northampton County 23rd April 1776.

The Honorable The Committee of Safety Williamsburgh
Gentlemen:

We beg leave to lay before your honorable Body a few circumstances, in which we feel ourselves particularly interested. And that these may not take up a greater share of your attention than a variety of more important concerns may probably admit: we shall endeavor to be as concise and explicit as possible. On a late tryal of some Slaves of our property for feloniously carrying away a Vessel from this County the particulars of that transaction appeared to be these. The Vessel lying in Hungar Harbour, a White man and a negro were sent on board by the owner, to take care of her cargo consisting of some flour and pork. several negroes collected in the night and proceeded on board, without being discovered by the men placed there, who were without arms, and at that time asleep in the Cabin. Having cut the cables of the Vessel they sailed immediately into the Bay, and were observed early in the morning to direct their course towards James River. But the wind being ahead were pursued in whale Boats by the Soldiery stationed here and overtaken near Mock-jack Bay. At first they refused striking sail when ordered; but on being fired at they submitted without resistance and were brought back confined. The white man acquits them of any other ill treatment to himself than refusing to let him go on deck till sometime in the morning. These facts we have presumed to lay before you, and also to inform you, that the

Court passed sentence of condemnation on four of the slaves and directed their Execution to be on the second day of this Month. In the mean time the Court having entertained some Doubts as to the propriety of their proceeding in the matter, without your previous direction on that head; thought proper to suspend their Execution from time to time till these could be received. They looked upon this to be the more necessary as the Act of taking the vessel seemed rather intended to effect an escape to Lord Dunmore than any other Design of committing a Felony. A state of these facts we believe have already been transmitted to you. And as we are desirous, that every thing may appear in the clearest light before your honorable Body; we beg leave also to represent to you, that, as it appeared upon the tryal that several Hints of Lord Dunmore's extraordinary good treatment of the negroes in his possession were often thrown out to these deluded wretches, by a white man who was then a prisoner at large in this County; we cannot but hope that this circumstance may be thought some small Extenuation of their crime. Should this be the case, we earnestly request, that, in your Instructions to our Court you would direct, what in your Justice may be thought a suitable mitigation of their punishment.

We are with all respect, Gentlemen, Your most obedient, humble Servants

THOMAS PARRAMORE¹

JOHN BOWDOIN.

CAPTAIN RICHARD TAYLOR TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF SAFETY.

Caroline April 24th 1776.

Hon'ble Sir:

By the resolves of Congress, I see that all Vessels and

¹Thomas Parramore was a member of a family long resident on the Eastern Shore. He had been a member of the House of Burgesses for Accomac from 1758 to and including 1771. A Thomas Parramore, possibly the same, had been a Burgess for Accomac at the sessions of 1748 and 1749.

British property on the Water, and between High and Low water mark, is liable to be seized, there is three sloops rig'd Vessels with rigging & flatts lying now at Fredericksburg which I believe is very Clear that they are brittish property. I have made seizure of them, which I hope I have Done no more in Doing so than I had a right to Do. Two of the above vessels belong'd to Cunagam Cockrin & Co one called the Larke the other call'd Speedwell with 1 negroe fellow on board, the other one belong'd to Bogle Sumerfield and Co called the Susanah with Two negroe fellows on board, Robinson at Falmouth & Reid at Fredericksburg are factors for Cunagam & Co George Hambleton at Falmouth factor for Bogle & Co. Sir I hope your Honourable Committee will inform me as soon as possible what method I must take with them as the Keeping of the Negroes without they are seizable, would be Expensive. I have also seized $\frac{1}{2}$ of a vessel at portroyal which shall be glad of your advice in. I am informed she belongs to Dunlap Cross & Co Mr. James Dunlap factor for Cross & Co says that part belongs to him as his own private property, he claims half of her since Dec'b'r last by his account, he Dont Deny but what he took her with a view of saving himself as he says his Employers were in debted to him. I make no doubt if that scheme will save their vessels but they will all have owners.

I am sir, Y'r Very Hum'ble Serv't,

RICHARD TAYLOR²

The Honorable The Chairman of the Committee of Safety.

MILITARY COURT OF ENQUIRY, PRINCESS ANNE COUNTY, 1776

At a Court of enquiry held at Kemp's April 30th 1776.

²Richard Taylor, of Caroline county, son of Colonel George Taylor, of Orange county, was a captain in the Virginia State navy, during the Revolution, and appears to have been an active and efficient officer. He removed to Kentucky where he died August 30, 1825.

Present :

Capt. Markham,

Capt. Johnson

Capt. Davis,

Capt. Nicholas

Capt. Matthews.

Thos. Talbot an inhabitant of Norfolk County charged with being inimical to the Country and for extorting from the people.

Willis Linton being ca'd declares that he does not know any thing to the prisoner's prejudice.

Two of the witnesses deposed to the same purpose, and further declare that he has acted a very kind part by the inhabitants. Upon hearing the testimony the Court are of opinion that he be discharged.

John Scott charged with secreting the effects of Sprowle & C. and of supplying the fleet³ with provisions.

Two witnesses deposed that the prisoner had the sheep in his possession and that upon applying to him for pay for three hogs he offered him two geese and lambs in satisfaction for them. Jas. Warren and Saml. Dun. It appeared to the Court that when the sheep went to Scott's plantation there twenty of them and that there are only six left. John Williamson.

The Court are of opinion that he be put in as one.

Wm. Creamar charged with supplying the enemy with fish.

It appears by the testimony of divers witnesses that the

³The fleet referred to was, of course, that of Lord Dunmore. Many of the papers in this series illustrate the distressed condition of the people of Norfolk and the adjoining counties. A large number of these people were natives of Great Britain, and therefore had a natural sympathy with the mother country; many were engaged in commercial and related industries, all of which would be ruined by war; afloat was Dunmore's fleet bearing a force of regulars, refugee loyalists and runaway negroes, all exasperated against the "Rebels," and in straits for food and fresh water; ashore were the Virginia and North Carolina minute men under no very strict discipline, and hating the "Tories." Neither party could gain sufficient control to protect the inhabitants, who might well have said that they were between the Devil and the deep sea.

prisoner frequently purchased from two to three bunches of fish at a time. It also app'd that the neighbours could not purchase anything like that quantity. It likewise appeared that some of this fish was carried to the distillery by one of the family.

The Court are of opinion that he be sent to W'ms'burg to cool him.

JNO. MARKHAM.⁴

DEPOSITIONS TAKEN IN BEHALF OF GEO. OLDER, WAS FIND
FOR SELLING RUM.

May 4th 1776.

Sarah Childers being sworn says that about three weeks ago, some provincial soldiers came to George Oldner's, and ask'd him to sell them some; Mr. Oldner accordingly let them have the rum to the amount of near a gallon, without receiving any pay for it. She farther says that Mr. Oldner's wife deliver'd the rum to the men, and not Mr. Oldner himself. The witness adds that the men said they were deserters from the provincial Camp, at which Mr. Oldner express'd much surprise, desiring them to stay at his House all night; and return in the morning.

Zachariah Hutchings being sworn, says, that on the same day, Mr. Oldner let the provincial Soldiers have the rum, he applied to him for three Gallons. Mr. Oldner said he could not spare so much, having but little left, the remains of two Hogsheads he had got from the fleet—when he worked there before Christmas, and that Mr. Oldner farther said he had now two H'dds more of rum and one of Molasses in the fleet, which he could not get.

This witness says, also, that Mr. Oldner told him there had been two deserters there, who being short of cash, he let them have some rum without pay.

William Lowallin, being sworn, says, that he was one of a

⁴John Markham, of Chesterfield, captain of a company of minute men from that county.

party, out some time ago, when they sent one or two men to Mrs. Oldner's for some rum; the men return'd with the rum, and money also, which they said Mrs. Oldner had deliver'd them back, on their saying they wanted money, and deserters from the provincial Camp.

William Roberts being sworn, says that he was on the same party with the other witness and after the rum was bought from Mrs. Oldner's, he went there to get some bread, which they supplied him with very readily without taking pay for it. They also gave him a dram, and said the rum in the bottle was every drop in the House.

Sarah Childers being cross examined, says, she lives at Mr. Oldner's and that she knows nothing of Mr. Oldner's going on board the fleet; of his carrying anything to or from there, nor of his having any communication whatever with the enemy. And that when Mr. Oldner sold the rum to the Soldiers, they paid him rather short, on which he delivered them the money again, and said they were welcome to it.

AT A COURT OF ENQUIRY HELD MAY 6, 1776.

Present:

Capt. Davies, Pres't.

Capt. Nicholas,	Capt Matthews,
Capt. Morton,	Lieut. Petters,

Mr. John Willoughby⁵ was bro't before the court Lieut Dixon deposes that upon some of the party that was with Mr. Dixon, having stopped one of Mr. Willoughby's father's negroes, Mr. Willoughby was in a great passion and either said such proceedings would make the people turn to the other side, or make a third party. Upon Capt. Campbell's telling him he must remove, he said he could not.

Capt. Campbell deposes that he heard Mr. Willoughby tell

⁵John Willoughby, of Willoughby's Point, one of the wealthiest and most prominent men of that section. In regard to him, see this Magazine, I, 447-450; IV, 81-83; XIV, 252.

Mr. Dixon that he (Dixon) knew that he (Willoughby) was a friend to the Country. That upon Capt. Campbell's telling him he must remove he said he could not and added that such proceedings would make the people turn to the other side or make a third party the witnesses does not recollect which. Capt. Campbell also further deposes that Mr. Willoughby said that he would be dammed if any body meddled with his boat if he did not blow a ball thro' his body, upon which he was ordered under guard.

Mr. Willoughby in his defence says he was a little in liquor and is sorry for what he has said. That as his boat had been many months out of water, and could not be readily put into proper order for use, he had drop't some threatning expressions against any person that would unnecessarily destroy it.

The court being sensible his conduct was the result of his distress of mind.

GEORGE OLDNER FOR TRADING WITH AND ASSISTING LORD
DUNMORE.

[Illegible] Moore deposes that when he was confined as a prisoner by Lord Dunmore George Oldner greatly insulted him, calling him a dammed rebel, and asked him if he was not a pretty fellow to be fighting against his king, and many such expressions. This the prisoner confessed.

Anthony Flavel deposes that he has frequently been furnished with rum from George Oldner; that he, as well as others, has often sent for rum to Oldner's house, and has been told his rum was out but that he would have enough in the morning, which he has always found to be true, and that he retailed it from jugs which it was generally believed in the witnesses neighborhood were filled from time to time on board the fleet.

Samuel Leneve deposes that he was upon a scouting party with Lieut Rogers who sent him to Oldner's for rum. The witness says, when he went to Oldner's he pretended to be a

deserter, upon which Oldner ordered some grog to be made for him, prest him to dine with him and to stay with him all night: That he spoke very highly in praise of Lord Dunmore, asked the witness what money he had about him, and upon being told very little, Oldner gave him a shilling to bear their expences and rum to carry with them desiring at the same time that he would not let Lord Dunmore know that he sold rum to the Shirtmen or else he would not let him have any more, at last recollecting himself he said it is no matter, as you are deserters will not mind it. The witness further deposes that he firmly believes that Oldner tho't he was a deserter, and that the kind reception he met with, was owing to that belief and that he seemed much pleased with their desertion, and gave them some instructions how to get on board.

Joshua Parsley deposes that he was with Leneve at the time above mentioned, and swears to the truth of the above facts, and believes Oldner was much pleased at their supposed desertion.

Ensign Lawson deposes that from the information of the scouting party that was out with him, he believes that Mr. Oldner was endeavoring to conceal his boat from his party but being discovered he invited Mr. Lawson to drink some grog at his house and refused to be paid for it, his wife at the same time [Illegible].

Zachariah Hutchins deposes that he has heard Mr. Oldner curse Lord Dunmore and that he sincerely believes Mr. Oldner to be as good friend to the Country as any man on the continent of Norfolk, as he calls it. That upon his applying to him for rum, he said he should have some, if he could get at what he had bought from the fleet, which he was afraid he could not get now as Lord Dunmore had published a proclamation against anything come ashore. This witness appears to the Court to be intoxicated with liquor.

TORY PRISONERS NOW IN THE PUBLICK GOAL MAY 6, 1776.

Adam Bell.

Geo. Fryar prisoner of War on parole.
 John Carmont.
 Jn. Goodrich, Jn. Sweney a Deserter.
 Geo. Blair. Jno. Goodrich, Sen.
 W. Cas. Cokes.
 Robt. Shedden.
 Jn. Mcintier.
 Jas. Waller.
 And. Ballingale.
 Alex'r Thompson.
 Hen. Hambleton.
 Peter Butt.
 Wm. Holderness prisoner of War.
 Negroes.
 David to Capt. Calvert.
 Jack to Sprowle.
 Gilbert to Balentine. Harry to Jn. Goodrich.
 America to Thos. Hogard.
 Lucy to Jas. Dunn.
 Weed to Jas Stewart.
 Mike to Jn. Goodrich.
 George to Jn. Saunders
 Sue & Sommerset to Do.
 James to C. Mifflin.
 Will Tully. Free.
 Aberdeen to Goodrich.

[Endorsement].

A list of [Illegible].

May 6th 1776

Wm. Cowper for Goodrich.

JAMES TAIT TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF SAFETY IN RE-
GARD TO MAKING SALT.

Northampton 6th May, 1776.

Sir:

When I did myself the honor of waiting on you, and the

Hon'ble Council of Safety in Feby last—I thought the dismal apearance their was at that time, of not succeeding in my salt scheme made it absolutely necessary for me to apply to you and that Hon'ble Comite for the the Loan of a sum of money to enable me to put another Pan to work and as it appears by a state given in at that time, that I was in advance, I did not doubt of geting that assistance that was necessary, not only for the Good of the Country but for the absolute necessity of puting the works that was partly finished, in a more perfect state. But being given to understand by you and that Hon'ble Council, that they were not authorised to give me any further assistance, than had been already given, by a former Convention, and that they understood I was obliged to pay back that which I had received; I was obliged to return, and make the best of a piece of Business, which evidently gave me more trouble & Vexation, from the unluck Construction of the Pan, than I would chuse to undergo again, for a Complement of the like sum:—and ever since my return, using my out most endeavours for the support of my family. I have not made by that Pan 50 Bush'ls of salt fitt for sale, and has got Eight men to victule & cloath, & pay hire for 3 of them. The profits of which, does not by any means, appear sufficient to enable me to pay that sum which has been expend on these works, if I had taken that money with a vew to pay it back:—which I do solemly declair, I never would have rec'd on any such terms; And it was certainly never meant by the Hon'ble Convention, who were pleased to grant it, as appear by their resolves—and by a Bond which lays in the possession of the Treasurer, before that sum was granted. I certainly can bring some of the Gentlemen then present to remembrance that the Treasurer particularly mentioned, in Convention as an inducement for their encouraging, the scheme, his having Bond and Security, in his hands, for my due performance of the same, which at that time evidently settisfyed every, or most of the Delegates. And I hope Sir that you and the present Hon'ble Convention will now be settisfyed to let me remain in possession of the works, as my

own property in Consideration of the infinit trouble, I have had in bringing them to the perfection they are now at. From the construction of the joints of that Pan—and the exceeding weakness of the Sea Water this Winter, it may very justly be matter of Wonder, how I did to make her hold water—which our Werthey Deligate Nath'el Savage, Esq., will inform your Hon'ble Body. Tho I must beg to deliver over these works, which are erected if they are determined I should pay back that sum of money, yet I think it my duty to offer my services to thee Country, in general, or to any Gent'ln in particular in erecting salt works in any other part of the Country, tho the situation of this place for making salt is good, yet is now rendered useless from its being on this side of the Bay. I ordered a Pan of a proper Construction to be made by Mr. Zane 6 Months ago—and I have been inform'd by him some time ago, that it is done, but I cannot get any Vessell to go for it—so that if the Hon'ble Convention thinks Proper, that Pan may be erected on some retired spote on the Western Shore, and tho' the Brine is not very strong, yet at these times it may very well defray the expence. I beg to be favoured with, the resolution of the Hon'ble Convention on this affair, of my holding the works & what I may except. And in the mean time I have the honor to be sir.

Yours & this Hon'ble Bodys Most Devoted Humble Serv't,

JAMES TAIT.

(TO BE CONTINUED)